

## 2019 Elite Mile Recap

**The 8th annual Elite Mile started with some solid fighting for position** as the girls collapsed in off the waterfall start. Coming out of the scrum clean was Ericka Vanderlende, the senior from Rockford, Michigan - 3rd place finisher in the 2018 Elite Mile and defending Elite 3200 champ. Vanderlende quickly opened up a 30 meter lead that she never relinquished, winning the race in 4:55.79. As the chase pack attempted to close the gap on Vanderlende, some fell off the pace, but most held together to make for an exciting finish for spots 2-5 and 6-13. On the last lap of the 300 meter oval, Seniors Judy Rector and Caitlin Rose were unable to hold off Junior Zofia Dudek (T-9th place at last year's event) who finished 2nd in 4:58.52 (a new personal best), with Rector 3rd (5:01.70) and Rose 4th (5:02.46).

**The boys race started with strikingly less aggression**, but ended with a flurry of lead changes that brought the crowd to their feet. Corey Gorgas, senior from Saugatuck, MI, set the conservative pace early, but never by more than a few meters. At about the 500 meter mark, Foster Malleck, all the way from Kitchener, Ontario, took over the lead and sped up the pace considerably. The pack followed suit with Gorgas and Ann Arbor senior Nick Foster leading the chase as the Canadian senior maintained about a 5 meter lead for the next half mile. With 300 meters to go, Foster (runner up in the 2018 Elite Mile) left the pack and made his move in earnest to catch Malleck. Sensing his competition nearing, Malleck dug deep to find yet another gear with which to finish this full mile, but Foster would not relent. As they sprinted laboriously down the final 60 meters of the race, the traded positions seemingly with every stride, back and forth, until finally Foster crossed the finish line just ahead of Malleck, a margin of victory of only 6 one-hundredths of a second. Foster finished in 4:13.86 and Malleck in 4:13.92. Gorgas held on for 3rd with a time of 4:20.09.